# "Travels"

## III. Betty's Trip to Porto Rico

KATHARINE R. CROWELL

Woman's Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.
156 Fifth Avenue, New York

Price 2 cents per copy: $2.00 per hundred

# "Travels"

## III. Betty's Trip to Porto Rico

### *Introductory*

(Wherein Betty McAlister tells her good news to "Miss Margaret" and the girls, in missionary meeting assembled, and who are just now in the enjoyment of the social half hour which always followed the regular meetings of this society.)

*Betty.* Oh, Miss Margaret! I have something *splendid* to tell you, but please try to guess what it is!

*Miss Margaret. Guess?* How can I? Come and help me, girls!

*Gladys.* I know, Betty; you are going away again.

*Betty.* Yes; but *where* am I going?

*Susanna.* To Europe?

*Edith.* Alaska?

*Janet.* Nova Scotia?

*Helen. China?*

*Betty.* No! No! No! No!

*Miss Margaret.* (To herself, as she looked at Betty's dancing eyes and heard her merry laughter. "Bless her dear, glad heart!") *Aloud*: "Does our Flag wave where you are going, Betty?"

*Gladys* (interrupting). Oh, I know! Hawaii!

*Betty.* No, but you are getting "hot!"

*Miss Margaret.* Porto Rico, possibly?

*Betty.* Yes, Miss Margaret! Actually Porto Rico! Isn't it just too lovely? I never supposed I should travel *in the tropics!*

*Susanna.* Who is going with you, Betty?

*Betty.* Why, of course, Aunt Julia. At least, I am going with her. She is going to write for *The Century* about Porto Rico. Isn't she lovely to ask me to go with her? It is too bad you are not all going. I don't like to be the only traveler.

*Miss Margaret.* Girls! Why need Betty be the only traveler? Why should we not *all* go to Porto Rico?

*Gladys.* But, Miss Margaret, I haven't an Aunt Julia!

*Susanna.* Or a writing aunt by any other name!

*Edith.* Or any aunt at all, for that matter.

*Helen.* My Aunt Helen travels *lots,* but alas! she does not invite *me.*

*Miss Margaret.* But I mean that while Betty is gone we shall become a *stay-at-home* travel club. I promise you beautiful times, and I suggest that you each think up six or more questions—regular *posers*—and when this sure-enough traveler gets back, you will fire these questions at her and just see if our Betty can answer them all!

*Betty* (her eyes shining brighter than ever). *"Agreed!"*

Presbyterian Historical Society
425 Lombard Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19147

# Betty's Letters

San Juan, Porto Rico,
February, 191—

DEAR MISS MARGARET:

Here I am in Porto Rico. We came into San Juan harbor just before sunrise. Aunt Julia and I were out on deck while the stars were still shining. Such magnificent skies! "Twinkle, twinkle, little star" was not written for Porto Rico, for these splendid stars are not little and they don't twinkle, but shine with a steady light. And the sunrise was so beautiful! The lovely, soft clouds, all golden and rose-colored and violet, seemed to melt into the softness of the sky. The nearby mountains showed a brighter and brighter green as the sun rose higher, while those farther away were the softest blue. Already we have been sightseeing, and Aunt Julia is now writing out some of her notes. As for me, I am observing everything and taking notes all the time in my mind, for I do not forget the questions the girls are thinking up. Of course they'll ask about "the haunted sentry box" and I'm *ready for them.*

San Juan is so curious and so interesting. I am mailing with this some post-cards showing many of the "sights" we have seen to-day. Please number all cards I send you in order received. With these to remind me, when I get home I can give a "travelogue" at our meeting. Morro Castle should be number one. I wish you were here with us, dear Miss Margaret! Perhaps you will be, on my next trip, if I ever take another. Please begin to plan to go to—well, say *Alaska!* with

Your

BETTY.

P. S. We expect to go out to Santurce to-morrow. I am *crazy* to see the hospital, for it has always been, you know, one of our specially favorite *extra* objects ever since we heard those "Echoes from San Juan" and tried to "help a little." Do you remember?

B. M.

San Juan, Porto Rico,
February, 191—

DEAR GIRLS:

We are having a perfectly splendid time! Porto Rico is *lovely*, and awfully interesting. The old Spanish things are so picturesque and the new American improvements on them make me just *thrill* with pride.

It is perfectly wonderful how much the United States has done in—I think—sixteen years. You know I never can remember dates, excepting of course, dear old 1492, and even that is not correct here, for Columbus perversely landed in Porto Rico in 149*3!* But girls, it almost takes my breath away to think that I stood to-day where Columbus—actually Christopher Columbus! once stood. It makes me quiver to think of it; nevertheless, I'm glad I am living in these splendid times, rather than when he was here. Girls did not take glorious trips with Aunt Julias in 1493!

You may be sure nothing is allowed to escape my watchful eyes, for I am remembering that coming "quiz." If only I had eyes that could see every way, like old Argus—was that his name?—whom we studied about in our "Myths," you know.

We have seen lots of interesting things already, as I said, but the very first thing I want to tell you about is our hospital. The hospital is not in San Juan itself, but two or three miles out of the city, in a suburb called Santurce.

We had a lovely ride out on the trolley, which was full, for crowds of people were going to the Park, which is just beyond the

hospital. We passed the San Juan Country Club, to which many automobiles were spinning their way, for this is the club of the Americans, and many people drive out every afternoon.

When we came near to the hospital I was *so* excited! Do you remember the dolls we dressed for the hospital? It was the very first thing we did in our mission band—it *was* a mission band then—and we were the merest kiddies, of course, but I remember that while we sewed and pricked our fingers (more pricks than stitches, probably), Miss Margaret told us about the sick children of Porto Rico, to some of whom our dolls would be given to amuse them when they were con—con—well, con- *something*. I can't think quite how to spell it, but anyway it only means while they were slowly getting well. So you can fancy how pleased I was when Aunt Julia said this morning, "Shall we go out to one hospital this morning, Betty?" I certainly did not decline her invitation.

It is just beautiful out there at Santurce. The superintendent told us such interesting things about the time there was in getting just the right spot on which to build a hospital. Of course it had to front on the ocean (it does, for about two hundred feet); it had to be away from the noise and dirt of the city and of the military road (of which more, later); and yet, of course it had to be in plain sight and easy to get to. Then, too, in those long ago days (*it was in* 1903!), the mosquitoes were terrible—all sorts, but especially the fever-giving kinds, and if the hospital should be built on low land, or with low land to the north or northeast of it, the winds would bring these mosquitoes and that would mean sickness instead of health to the patients.

This location proved to be just right in all these and other ways, so it was bought by our Board and the various buildings (which look just like their pictures in our mission

bank book), were put up as soon as enough money to pay for them had been contributed.

I think of the thousands and thousands of poor, sick folk—as the Bible calls them—who have been cured and to whom the gospel has been preached in these buildings! But other buildings are needed now, for the old wooden ones are worn out. Why, some of them actually leak! Sometimes the nurses have to carry tubs from one leaky spot to another to catch the water, and there *is* a story, but it may not be true, that once, during a serious operation, there was a furious storm of wind and rain, and the leakings were so bad that umbrellas had to be held over doctor and patient and nurse! I hope this is only a joke, but it is no joke to know that when such a storm comes—storms are terribly sudden in Porto Rico—the wind will probably blow a shutter from a window and torrents of rain will pour in over the walls. Besides, the white ants have made the buildings very unsafe, and there are other inconveniences that must take perfectly *enormous* patience to bear. So it seems, now that we have seen the old buildings, even more splendid that new ones of concrete are soon to take their place, for "los Americanos" have found out that concrete is the proper building material for Porto Rico.

As a well-known advertisement says: "It costs a little more, but——."

The doctors and nurses manage splendidly in spite of the inconveniences, and the sick people are all the time coming, and every bed in the wards is needed. Of course the children's ward is the most interesting to me. There are other hospitals in Porto Rico, but this is the only one having a children's ward. There are some children here now, who are just *dear*. One little fellow named Pedro is perfectly captivating; the doctors and nurses love him dearly. Poor little chap! he has had a hard time. He had crooked feet and could get about only by creeping on his hands

and knees. A good many persons in Porto Rico have these crooked feet. Auntie and I saw a man in San Juan going about in this way, on his hands and knees. He was dreadful to look at, poor man! and Pedro would have to grow up in the same way if it were not for our hospital. After he had been under the care of the doctors for some time he was sent home, with orders to the mother to bring him back at a certain time. But what do you think? His mother had taken off the plaster casts and the poor little feet were as crooked as ever. So everything had to be done over again, and Pedro is to be kept in the hospital this time until he is perfectly well.

I had a lovely time telling stories to two children who had learned to understand and speak English in the public schools. They were perfectly *entranced,* and I think they liked the Bible stories best of all. I could just *feel* them listening. It gave me such a strange feeling, too, to realize that to these little patients who had just been brought in, the stories were absolutely *new.* I have told them the story of the Good Shepherd and the next time I go to the hospital I shall tell them about the feeding of the five thousand. I can hardly wait! Really, girls, you cannot imagine how *inspiring* it is to have such eager listeners! Their sweet, dark eyes seemed never to move from my face, and I could see in them all the things they were feeling. It is just *lovely.* But oh, they are such thin, pale little things! The difference between them and the fat, rosy children who have been cured is wonderful. And think how many, *many* have been cured! Isn't it perfectly *fine* that we have this hospital at San Juan?

I heard the head doctor telling Aunt Julia about the great numbers who come for treatment. He said that in 1907 they had 7,000 cases and in the last year 21,000. "Why!" said Auntie, "at this rate, in another seven years you will be treating 63,000!" The doc-

tor smiled and said he hoped that before that time so much more would be accomplished and such an impression made upon the people by the hospitals and by the sanitary and medical work of the Government that there would be much less sickness in Porto Rico. I think he said that when "los Americanos" first came to the island, ninety persons out of every hundred were sick.

Besides all this, in the hospital training school for nurses, Porto Rican young women are all the time learning how to prevent as well as to cure sickness, and quite a number who have been graduated are now visiting nurses, teaching the mothers in the poor little shacks how to live in a healthy way, and how to bring up their children. So it is easy to see that this terrible amount of sickness must grow to be less and less.

Afterwards Aunt Julia told me about some of the splendid things the Government is doing to make Porto Pico healthy, and altogether I should think it must in time become one of the healthiest islands in the world, but *dear, dear me!* it is plain that that happy time is not here yet. So many cripples and blind and thin and lifeless-looking people we see! So I am gladder and gladder about our hospital, and the visiting nurses, and the missionary and all the rest!

(This letter is really not so long, when you remember that it is to be divided among you all!)

Aunt Julia has arranged for us to go tomorrow, by automobile, over the military road. Isn't that *fine?* I am sure it will be a perfectly beautiful ride. I must stop right here, for I hear someone calling *"Elizabeth!"* and this means that "Betty" and "Beth" and "Bettine" have all been called in vain, and patience is exhausted! So "no more at present, and hoping you are the same,"

Your friend,

BETTY.

Ponce, Porto Rico,
March, 191—

DEAR GIRLS:

Well, here we are at Ponce, over on the opposite side of the island from San Juan. The ride across is simply *grand.* Aunt Julia says the military road is one of the greatest "feats of engineering" in the world. It was built, I think, by soldiers and prisoners in Spanish days. We saw such beautiful trees, some in bloom; one kind had *scarlet* flowers others covered with brilliantly colored and most luscious fruit. And the ferns! And the royal palms! And the mountains! green to their very tops, or if farther away, such an exquisite violet-blue. *Just perfect.* But, Oh, girls! I did feel so utterly foolish! What *do* you think I said, not only said but *exclaimed,* so that everyone must have heard? Well, I must tell you, I suppose. We were spinning along a most lovely bit of road, and suddenly we curved around the shoulder of a big mountain, and there was such a beautiful view of other mountains. You can't think how lovely they were. I looked and I looked, and suddenly I gasped out, "Oh, *see,* Aunt Julia! those mountains over there are *covered* with snow!" *Snow* in Porto Rico! Aunt Julia just gave me a twinkling look. I was so mortified, but remembered just in time to prevent my sinking out of sight, that perhaps the other occupants of our car did not understand English, but then, perhaps they *did.* Alas, you never can tell in Porto Rico! And what were those snow fields, if you please? Why, nothing but great tobacco plantations covered with white cheese cloth, because the leaves are more delicate in flavor when protected in this way. I can tell you "I thought while I counted twenty" before exclaiming over the next strange thing! And strange things appeared all along the way to Ponce. We found Porto Rico quite different across the mountains on the southern side. There is a great deal of rain on the northern side

because the winds blowing from the northeast bring plenty of moisture, but on the other side of the mountains less rain falls, and the fields have to be irrigated. The Government is doing it. And speaking of this, reminds me of the many schoolhouses—in all the island there are about twelve hundred—we have seen, flying the flag, like ours at home. Yet when the Americans came there was not a real schoolhouse, (Aunt Julia says, "Yes, Betty, there was *one*"), but what was *one*, for there are thousands and thousands and thousands of children. I never saw so many. There are so many different tints of complexion, too. Here and there we see little girls, almost as fair as lilies, with blue eyes and light hair, and from lily-white they shade down, through yellows and olives and browns, to ebony black! Auntie and I have made out a perfect *scale of color!* For a long time there was one olive note missing, but at last we found it in a boy who brought us the most delicious fruit and lovely flowers. Great luscious oranges that you simply cannot *imagine*, and the olive-faced boy gave us six for *two cents. Now*, don't you envy me? And the pineapples, and grapefruit and many other delicious kinds! It is a good thing that we can get them, for the cooking in some places where we stopped was—well, certainly very far from *delicious*, but there are two or three good hotels, and will soon be more, of course.

Oh, I must tell you of something that happened this morning. We had stopped at a lovely, cool place, near a spring, for luncheon, and afterwards were making a collection of the most gorgeous flowers and exquisite ferns, when an old man came from a little house near by, and said to Aunt Julia, (she told me afterward what he said):

"Will you tell me about this new religion that the Americans have brought? I have heard a little, but not enough."

So Auntie stopped gathering flowers and sat down and talked to the old man for a long

time, who listened with greater and greater interest and delight. Aunt Julia did not speak at all for a while, after we started on again, but at last she said: *"How thankful I am* that I studied hard when I was a girl, especially languages, for how could I have told 'the old, old story' to that old man if I had not learned Spanish?" And Auntie knows that I *detest* languages and that I—of course if I thought it would make me more useful when I am grown up, I *could* study harder, but did you ever know of anyone who stirs you all up to make yourself *worth while,* as Aunt Julia does? Now, I am perfectly sure that when I am back in school studying verbs, *any* kind of foreign language verbs, I shall think of the look that lighted up the face of that old man and—why, of course I shall simply *have* to study harder. O me! O my!

Someone told me before I came that I would see very few birds in Porto Rico, but we have seen a good many—some beauties, too, among them. I suppose the number is increasing, for bird hunting is not allowed now, and laws protecting them are strictly enforced. Besides, there is a bird course of study in the public schools! This is to teach their usefulness to agriculture. Altogether I should think the whole bird world would fly to this paradise of safety and loveliness and perfectly inexhaustible fruit!

You would be surprised to see how *modern* some of the towns are; having trolleys, electric lighting plants and water works. This last cannot be very difficult to bring about, for there are twelve long rivers—*rather* long—(the island is only thirty-five miles wide), and about 1,200 smaller streams in little Porto Rico, which, by the way, is about half as large as New Jersey, so none of the sixty-six cities and towns *can* be very far from a water supply, but then some of the water is not good for drinking. There are fine public buildings, too, in many of the towns; but it is more interesting to me that the cities are allowed to have bands or orchestras for public concerts.

Such gaily-dressed crowds attend these concerts. Every place we go we see something fine that the Government is doing. One day I saw a group of young men, carrying oil cans and barrel heads, having what seemed to be an exciting argument with a man who came out of the house in front of which they had stopped. I wondered what it could all mean. *Why* should they have seen so many barrel tops and no barrels? I soon found out that the people living in the miserable little houses had the barrels—and that was the whole trouble, for water barrels without tops mean myriads of mosquitoes, and the young men we were watching were *mosquito exterminators,* though they probably have a far grander sounding name in Spanish. I believe Uncle Sam gives notice that all mosquito-breeding places around a man's house must be made *mosquito proof* by a certain day. If not, these young men, having the authority of Uncle Sam behind them, will attend to the matter! I suppose this accounts for the excited conversation—which probably looked far more so than it really was, for the people, I notice, talk with their whole body—tongue and eyes and hands and *arms, especially!*

We have had to come 'round to the western part of Porto Rico because all Presbyterian missions are at this end of the island. Aunt Julia says this is because when Porto Rico became *ours,* the different Protestant mission boards of the United States were all eager to send the Bible and missionaries to the people, and of course it would be too bad to have several missions in one town and none at all in another, so the various boards arranged with one another that each would be responsible for giving the gospel to a certain district, and this is how we as Presbyterians are responsible for the western part (except in San Juan, the capital, and Ponce, the largest commercial city, where any denomination may do missionary work).

My! but I'm glad I've finished that long explanation! I just now asked Auntie if it

was correct, and she said "Yes," but her eyes twinkled and twinkled, and she added, "I suppose, Betty, since you are becoming so wise and learned, you of course know the name of that arrangement you speak of?" "Has it a *name,* Auntie?" I said. "I supposed it was just plain common sense." "Oh, yes," Auntie said, "it has a name, and a long one; it is called 'Missionary Comity in Porto Rico'," and I don't know what "comity" *means,* and I believe you will not, either, when you read this (but perhaps you have skipped it).

On our way here we saw a good many sugar plantations and at one place were shown through a big sugar mill. It was awfully interesting—only it made me sorry to see how *weak* the working people look. Auntie says it is partly because they don't have the right kind of food—some of them seem to live on nothing but bananas and coffee, and a very poor kind of bread, and of course this diet is not strengthening. They do not have regular meals as we do; a laboring man keeps a chunk (pardon me) in his pocket and munches on it as long as it lasts. They are queer looking little loaves, long and pointed. This is because the "baking pan" is a rolled-up banana leaf.

Besides, the poor people don't know how to take care of their houses, but some of the rich people have the *loveliest* homes; Aunt Julia has been invited to a good many, and the ladies and girls are so graceful and charming and beautifully dressed. And so are the boys, for that matter. But even the very poor people, who do not even know how to read, are so polite always, and so kind and hospitable, only they have almost nothing to offer.

One day one of the missionaries made up a walking party and invited us to go. We found a delightful place under the shade of some most beautiful trees, where we could eat our luncheon. One must always have coffee, though, and the missionary went over to a little house near by and asked for some hot

water. The people living in the house were as kind as could be, but the only thing they had to heat the water in was an old tomato-can! The missionary was not dismayed at that, and by dint of filling the can several times, enough water was heated for the coffee, but the real difficulty was the heating of the water on the charcoal stove, for the stove was very small and there was very little charcoal. Aunt Julia says she never tasted anything so good as Porto Rican coffee.

I don't know anything about that, but I do know it will be a long time before I forget that poor, poor, *poor* little house, and its kind and pleasant people. I do hope some of the nurses from our San Juan hospital will find their way to this part of the island, some day. We do see so much sickness. Yet, as I said before, they say that when the people shall have learned the laws of sanitation (that is, how to live), Porto Rico will be one of the healthiest places in the world, and so I hope when you take a trip to Porto Rico you will not see so many *teary* sights, not that I often really cry, but these pitiful little children do make me feel teary in my heart, almost all the time. But Aunt Julia says that things are growing better and better, and by the time these children have grown up, the children who will be living then will be *much* happier, because, you see, the knowledge of the gospel of the Lover of little children is (thanks partly to that "Comity" Law), spreading very rapidly over Porto Rico, and already there are many, many homes where children are learning about Jesus, as we did in *our* baby days.

We had such a lovely time at San German, which is an old, old place, visiting our little Spanish mission school, held in the Sunday school room of the church. This room was small and dark. The building is not very large, but it certainly contained that day a large number of children, *so* dear and *so* obedient! They study well, too, their sweet

Spanish teacher told us, having all the studies taught in the public schools to children of their age, and the Bible beside. They are so quick to learn! While we were there the teacher read them some verses from Mark's Gospel, and then said: "Can anyone repeat what I have said?" You should have seen the little hands waving all over the room, so many that the teacher told them to repeat the verses in unison. So they did, and Auntie said they made hardly any mistakes. The teacher said almost all the children attend the church services, but there is a special service for them in this room on Friday nights. I thought the teacher was lovely, but supposed she could speak only Spanish, so I was much surprised when she said to Aunt Julia in English: "It is my best pleasure to teach the children, because they will be the Christians of future years, and at the same time because it is my heart's desire. Christ loves the children and we must follow His plans. When Auntie praised the little pupils, she said: "I pray daily to my Lord to care for the seed planted in the hearts of these loving children, so that His followers may increase in number, and that at last we can say, 'Porto Rico belongs to Christ'."

Mayaguez, Porto Rico,
March, 191—

DEAR MISS MARGARET:

We have had such a time telegraphing and telephoning, trying to find a bag Aunt Julia lost on our way here. I had no idea before that one could telegraph or telephone *all over*, or at least, all around, Porto Rico. It surprised me, too, that we should come here from San German by train. I do hope you are receiving all the post-cards I am sending you. Aunt Julia often helps me choose them, so I know they are well selected. We have seen such interesting things and people lately, especially the sugar fields and the coffee *fincas*. The little coffee plants have to be shielded

from the hot sun, so bananas are planted between the rows. The banana grows so rapidly that its big leaves are soon equal to umbrellas in shading the young coffees.

But I meant to tell you in this letter about our *La Marina* school here, in the most crowded part of Mayaguez, down by the seashore, which, of course, is the reason for its name.

But O, Miss Margaret! you should see the *beautiful* drawn-work done by some of the girls, for you see this is principally an industrial school. There are classes in embroidery and basketry, too. Such lovely work! Auntie told me to choose patterns that I liked, and then she gave an order for a dozen handkerchiefs, which are to be sent to me next December, so that I can give them to the girls for Christmas, and I bought several baskets, too. My collection is certainly growing—mountain, Indian and Porto Rican—so far.

The children here have the usual teaching, too. This teaching is good practice for the older girls from our other school in this place. Auntie has spent much time there but I like best to watch the Marina pupils at work. In both the Bible is taught every day in every class. The Marina school is very full. There are *so many* children everywhere we go, and they need people to teach them. The principal of this seaside school said to Aunt Julia, "The call for capable Christian women to work for Porto Rican women *rings so loud* that I should think it could be heard to the uttermost parts of the United States!" Auntie looked very sober, and I heard her murmur to herself, "And one clear call *for me!*"

I am sure I have heard the words before, somewhere. But wouldn't Aunt Julia make a lovely and splendid teacher? Perhaps some day she will come to Porto Rico to *stay*. But it will not be this time, for we shall soon be coming home. Still, I think you will likely have one more letter from

YOUR BETTY.

Aguadilla, Porto Rico,
April, 191—

DEAR GIRLS:

Talk about *thrills!* What do you suppose I did to-day? Nothing less than drink from the very selfsame spring at which Christopher Columbus quenched his thirst when he landed in 149*3!* One thing, though, prevented thrilling as much as I should have liked, and that is that I drank out of a *sanitary cup*. Yes, indeed; sanitary cups are now the law in Porto Rico, but I'm sure they were not, in the days of Christopher Columbus.

We left Mayaguez a few days ago, coming here through lovely scenery. We stopped at Anasco, where our Board has a school, rather different from our usual missions, because the public school takes in most of the children of the place, and so our school teaches in the afternoons things not taught in the public school, *especially* the Bible; Auntie thinks it would be a fine thing if there were many more schools like this.

I forgot to tell you about something that happened at Mayaguez while we were there. It was at Sunday School. Just before the opening exercises, a group of people, a whole family, I should think, came in. They looked as if they did not know what to do nor where to go, so the Superintendent went over and spoke to them. The father, I suppose it was, gave him a letter. The Superintendent opened it and took out a card, and where do you suppose the card came from? Why, from our San Juan hospital, and I saw that one of the children was smiling at me, as if she knew me, and sure enough, she did, for she was one who had listened to my story of the Good Shepherd. I must have told you or Miss Margaret about the "Identification Cards" they give to the patients leaving the hospital, telling them to present them at the Protestant church or Sunday school nearest to their home. This little girl had just gotten home, and on the very first Sunday brought her whole family

to Sunday school. Of course this will mean very pleasant things for them all, and isn't it nice to think that this sort of thing is likely to happen all over Porto Rico, for patients come to the hospital from far and near.

The Superintendent put *my* little girl in the class he had asked me to teach, so I had a chance to tell her one more Bible story. How her eyes shone, and what loving smiles she gave me! Her name is Pedra Zamora. She is just *dear*.

There are dear little children, too, at Pueblo Nueva, one of the schools of Aguadilla. Pueblo Nueva is the poorest part of Aguadilla; such miserable shacks are the homes of the pupils, and even these are sometimes, when a heavy storm comes up, washed right off into the sea, for Pueblo Nueva runs along the shore and very close to it.

I counted one hundred children the day we visited the school. We heard an examination on the Bible—it was the most wonderful thing! Those children did not falter or hesitate once, and some of the questions were *awfully* hard. Answers to some of them I'm ashamed to say I did not know—*think of it*, and I a Christian girl, brought up in an American Christian home. Of course it's my own fault, and my cheeks burn now when I think of it. But you should have seen those quick little thin hands waving for a chance to answer, almost before the question was out of the teacher's mouth!

We watched them making lace, too, and baskets, and I could not help seeing that they learn many other things while doing this work—patience and honesty and thoroughness, and neatness and keeping-at-it.

Just here Auntie looked at what I had written. *I knew what was coming.*

"I am sure, Betty, my dear," said Aunt Julia, "you are as honest as honest can be, but don't you think that on the whole, it would be good for *you* to learn lace and basket making?"

"But, Auntie!" I said, "I *do* keep at it—just look at the length of this letter!"

"I suppose I must give in, as to *that,*" said Auntie, "but——"

I have been so fascinated with the children at Pueblo Nueva, the school has such an interesting history, too, that I have spent all the time there, instead of going with Auntie to the other school in the better part of Aguadilla. However, I expect to go to-morrow, and can tell you about it when I get home, for I think this letter *is* long enough.

April, 191—

San Juan, Porto Rico,

DEAR MISS MARGARET:

I am not sure whether you will see *me* or this letter first, for we are leaving for home in a few days. There will be time for a visit, perhaps two, to our dear hospital. I am going to ask the Superintendent to show me the plans for the new building and to show me just where it will be built, so I can imagine it all, after I go home. But the lovely, blue, blue sea, and the palms, and the delicious salty breezes will be just the same as now.

I have had a lovely time, and Porto Rico is *perfectly beautiful,* and the sweet little children are perfectly dear, and I am almost bursting with gladness that our hospital and schools are helping to make so many of them healthier and happier.

Much love from

YOUR BETTY.

P. S. I am almost bursting, too, with answers to the girls' questions, at least to what I *suppose* they will be. It would have been much easier if I could have *known.*

B. M.

No. 508—1st Ed.—5, 1914.

A.E. DITTRICH, LTD., 209 W. 38th St., N.Y.